

Homespun Rhymes

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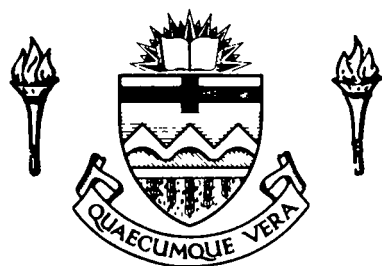
1948

MAIN

by

D. A. Morrow

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Homespun Rhymes

by

D. A. MORROW 

DEDICATED TO THE GRAND MEADOW LOCAL
UNITED FARM WOMEN OF ALBERTA



1948

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I write of things seen 'round the farm,
Of Meadow, Hill, of Field and Barn,
Of daily sights and signs.
Of Spelling, Diction, I'm not sure,
So if the meaning is obscure,
Just read between the lines!

—D. A. M.

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SPRING FEVER

'Twas in the early springtime
Upon a golden morn,
I stood, and looking eastward,
I saw a new day born.
The dew-drops on the newborn leaves
Were as a silver sheen,
And everywhere the eye did roam,
The earth was lush and green.
And methought, "It is most pleasant
Here to live, where men are men".
But my train of thought is broken,
"Hey, Dad! Watch that turkey hen".

Whence now cometh that bombardment,
Sudden as an earthly doom,
With its ceaseless roar and rattle,
And its steady Bing! Bang! Boom!
Are the Indians on the war-path?
Why that surely cannot be!
(Pshaw! Just tuning up a tractor,
On the farm of Walter Gee).

And now a voice is stealing,
Coming from the far north-east,
Bearing with it invitation
To an early morning feast.
Faintly, though I yet can hear it
And its haunting melod-ee,
But 'twas only neighbor Auten,
Calling long, "Poog-ee-ee, Poog-ee-ee".

As again I turn to eastward
And the glory of the sun,
What is that obscures the vision?
'Tis a dust cloud, dank and dun;
And it seems that from it cometh
A low toned symphony
As it weaves in dusty splendor
O'er the fields of Cervený.
And as thus I stand and ponder
On the wiles of Lady Luck,
The roaring monster passes—
(Myrl just bought another truck!)

Yea! It's great to rise in springtime
When the grass with dew is sweet,
(Or perchance like yester morning
Frozen crisp beneath the feet).
And 'twas ever worth the effort
To greet the rosy dawn,
What's that? Oh, 'tis Esther calling,
"Breakfast's ready Dad, come on".

A SONG

In my memory I see
A spot dear to me,
Oh why was I tempted to roam,
There's a house on a hill
Above the old mill,
A house I once knew as my home.

CHORUS

Could I enter as of yore,
That vine covered door,
Oh never more from there would I roam;
Where the robin and the thrush,
In the still evening's hush,
Sang round my dear old home.

And, oh! for the joys
That I knew when the boys,
Gathered round the old swimming hole,
Just to lie in the shade
Of that cool scented glade,
'Twould bring a sweet peace to my soul.

Now the pathway I see,
'Neath the old hawthorn tree,
Where I strayed with my sweetheart so true;
I remember the bliss,
Of that first lover's kiss,
As I whispered the words, "I love you".

Again, from the dell,
I hear the church bell,
As it tolled through the drear misty gloom,
When on a high mossy mound,
In the cold autumn ground,
They laid my sweetheart in the tomb.

AN EPICURE'S LAMENT

(Written after attending a U.F.W.A. banquet)

We were seated 'round the table,
November fourteenth was the date,
And it really was a wonder
The amount of food we ate;
And when thinking it was ended,
I did heave a mighty sigh,
A waiter set before me
The second piece of pie.

First, they served us with roast turkey,
It was done a golden brown,
Mashed potatoes, giblet gravy,
Which was easy putting down;
Peas and corn, and macaroni,
Yet I knew I'd have to try
To masticate and swallow,
That second piece of pie.

Of sweet potatoes, picalilli,
We ate a goodly fill;
Pickled peaches, currant jelly,
Were as grist unto the mill.
But I hope that if I ever
Shall be taken up on high,
They'll not give me for good measure
A second piece of pie.

There was celery, and olives,
And hot biscuits by the score,
And my plate was heaped with noodles,
Until I could eat no more;
There was dressing, spiked with onion,
Which of course I had to try,
But the thing that did the damage,
Was that second piece of pie.

But at last it is all ended,
For the hour is growing late,
And the fruit and pickles eaten,
Will no doubt regurgitate!
Yea, I'm feeling rather squeamish,
And perhaps my friends, I'll die,
Ugh! It's coming, gad-a-mercy,
Darn that second piece of pie!

A SONG OF THE NORTH

Oh give me the North in the early spring,
When the birds come back again,
Just to see the flash of the bluebird's wing,
Hear the robin's sweet refrain.
When the sun shines bright on an early morn,
Hear the dry grass faintly hiss,
When stirred by a south wind, blowing warm,
Soft as a sweetheart's kiss.

And give me the North when the summer calls,
When the roses bloom in June.
The clinging vine o'er the trellis falls,
And the year has reached its noon.
The air is sweet with the scent of grass
Washed by a gentle rain.
And a golden haze may now be seen
O'er the fields of waving grain.

The North for me in the days of fall,
When the fields are brown and sere;
The leaves are red on the garden wall,
And we know that winter's near.
Now the Northern light shines through the night,
Where the moose and the wild deer roam—
You may choose to live in a Southern clime,
But the Northland is my home.

And Ho! for the North in the wintertime,
When the fields are white with snow,
When the breath will form in a clear white rime,
And it's more than "ten below".
Just to hear the creak of the old snow-shoe,
Or the rasp of the speedy ski;
The North may not appeal to you,
But it's just the home for me.

Then here's to the north the whole year through,
Be it summer, spring or fall,
And also in the winter time
When the white snow covers all;
Where friendship is a living thing,
And merr are kind and true.
The northland is a pleasant land
And waits to welcome you.

A FRIEND IN NEED

On a cold November morning,
As the snow came drifting down,
I wandered, blue and lonesome,
In a little prairie town.

Far was I from all my loved ones,
And no friendly voice I heard,
And my heart was filled with longing
For a kindly smile or word.

And I felt a deep dejection,
As I trod the snowy street,
Stepping then into a restaurant,
For I knew that I must eat.

Then there came from out the shadows
One who was divinely fair,
One whose lips were red as cherries,
And like corn-silk was her hair.

Stood she then, with pad and pencil,
And her voice was low and sweet,
"Tell me now, oh gentle stranger,
What would'st thou best like to eat?"

"Bring to me, oh beaut'ous maiden,
Toast well done, with boiled eggs two,
And if thou dost have good coffee,
I would quaff that amber brew".

Straightly paced she to the kitchen,
Bringing forth the food to me,
Placed it on the table, saying,
"Wilt thou nothing else for thee?"

"Maiden, didst thou ever wander
Far from friends, and all alone,
Wishing thou couldst turn thy footsteps
T'ward the place thou callest home?

"If thou knowest that wretched feeling,
If of lonesomeness thou'st heard,
Let thy heart speak, gentle maiden,
Give me just a kindly word".

Then a shadow seemed to gather
In those eyes of deepest blue;
That she felt a deep compassion
For my loneliness I knew.

And her queenly head bent lower,
And I watched, twixt hope and fear,
As her ruby lips drew nearer,
Whispered then, these words of cheer:

"Harken to me now, oh stranger,
I am only one who waits;
Yet I fain would speak most kindly
To the stranger at our gates.

"Should thy servant speak too boldly
She thy pardon humbly begs,
Listen then, and heed my warning,
DO NOT TRY TO EAT THOSE EGGS!"

THE SILVER WEDDING

Five and twenty years we're married,
How the years slip swiftly by!
Leaving in their wake as tokens,
Silvered hair, for you and I.

Five and twenty years together,
Joys and sorrows have we known,
For, "It takes a heap of livin',
In a house, to make it home".

We've known days of sun and shadow,
Days when nothing would go right;
Days that brought us only gladness,
Days when all the world seemed bright

Hand in hand we'll face the future,
Let the years bring what they may,
Hoping God will bring us safely
To our Golden Wedding day.

REMEMBRANCE DAY, 1938

Twenty years since the guns were silenced in the Great War, and the world is again about to be plunged into another bath of blood. I have tried to write an indictment against the warmongers, and those whose duty it was to keep the peace between nations, and who have miserably failed so to do.

On this dark and dreary morning,
In the cold November rain,
I think of those numbered crosses,
That dotted the Flanders' plain;
Of those youths, the pride of our nation,
A sacrifice to Thor,
In the muck and blood of the trenches,
In "A war that would end all war".

Oh, ye who worship blindly
At the feet of the mighty Thor,
And ye who batten like maggots
On the greed and lust of war—
There on the day of reckoning,
When each soul has its due,
When you face those "pale battalions"
What will they say for you?

Theirs was a freedman's duty,
Yours an eternal shame,
For the beast they died to conquer,
Through you, now lives again;
Again is a warlord ranting,
As he boasts to the world of might,
Again have his servile minions
Girded their loins for the fight.

And when all accounts are settled,
On that grim reckoning day,
Heavy your guilty conscience,
Heavy the debt you'll pay.
And now in these "moments of silence"
We pray that war may cease;
And for you who "sleep 'neath the poppies"—
May you rest forever in peace.

OUR PIONEERS

(June, 1939)

"Our pioneers are passing on"
Was the thought that came to me,
On the day I stood beside the grave
Of my old friend William Gee.
And looking back through the mists of time
For almost forty years,
Thinking of those who once I knew,
My eyes did fill with tears.

English, Irish, American,
German, Scotsman, or Dane,
Though they might have come from the ends
of the earth,
Here, they were all the same.
Denmark gave us Hans Larsen;
From Iceland, Goodman came,
Seeking a home in a land that was new,
Caring not for wealth or fame.

Arthur Holben, and Jacob Beck,
Tom West, of the C.P.R.,
A. J. Crawford and Charlie Schierer—
They came from near and far;
Could they then look into the future?
And what there did they see
As they gazed at the naked country,
At the turn of the century?

There was Courtright, and Will Cervený,
John Dickau, and "Wes" O'Brien;
Their memory yet shall linger on
Without any words of mine.
They rest now from their labors,
And well may we drop a tear,
In memory of those men who helped
Push back the "last frontier".

And there was Doctor Campbell,
I'm sure we all knew him;
Nebraska gave us the Russells,
George, and his brother Tim;
There was Davidson, of Crystal Springs,
Who drove the big ox team;
And Evan Lloyd, who builded his home
Near Battle's winding stream.

Cook Myer, Algar and Martin,
David and Lemuel Wing,
Lou Fleming and T. J. Durkin,
What memories their names bring.
Truly they were the salt of the earth,
A breed of hardy men;
They have finished the tasks set for them
And "their works do follow them".

They are passing fast—
Will Gee was the last
To hear life's curfew bell,
God grant their sleep
Be sweet and deep,
Pioneers! Hail and Farewell!

MEMORIES

(Written for Mrs James Purnell, November, 1943)

I've finished the weekly ironing,
As stockings I now darn,
I'm thinking of all those years we lived
Out there on the Wolf Creek farm.

For the years we spend at farm life,
Strike deeper than you'd think,
I'd like to count the new-born pigs,
Or teach a calf to drink.

Or see the horses come from work,
And hear their trace chains clank,
As with outstretched necks they come to drink
At the old water tank.

The geese are coming from the creek,
By a stately gander led,
He knows, the wily rascal,
That the chickens have been fed.

• Yes, I know, at times the work was hard,
Some days seemed drear and long,
But contentment cannot be bought by the yard,
Nor is life one grand sweet song.

We've had good luck, and we've had bad luck;
We've known the drought's black curse;
But in spite of all that happened,
Things could have been much worse.

For no matter what fortune brought us,
No matter what went wrong,
I was always deeply thankful
That the children were well and strong.

And it seems the years did quickly pass,
The children were well-nigh grown,
Ere Jim and I did realize,
They would soon want homes of their own.

And as women will do, as women have done
Ever since time began,
Our daughter, who was the first to go,
Followed her chosen man.

But, oh! I was lonesome without her,
And more than once I cried;
But now her babe plays at my knee,
And I'm more than satisfied.

And our eldest son is on the farm,
And Leonard is with his Dad,
While Donald is in the Navy,
And there's yet another lad.

Who, wearing his country's Air Force blue,
And on wings that shine in the sun,
He'll ride the skies, as the eagle flies,
That's Gordon, our youngest one.

Of what have I then to complain?
Why should I fret or frown?
The farm work was too hard for Jim,
And he's better off here in town.

And I sit here in the firelight glow,
Old friends within my call;
And Jim is here, and is always near,
And that is the best of all.

A WEDDING DRESS OF 1899

With pipe and book, and easy chair,
In the evening sun's red glow,
There comes to me a scene so fair
Of the days of long ago.
My wife is walking among her flowers,
There in the bright sunshine;
And I'm thinking of a dress she wore
In Eighteen Ninety-nine.

That white silk dress, I plainly see—
The soft trim at the throat.
'Twas of such things, it seems to me,
That once the poets wrote.
It's silken folds did brush the flowers,
Sent forth a fragrance fine,
The wedding dress my sweetheart wore
In Eighteen Ninety-nine.

The bow of ribbon at the waist,
Did help the skirt's wide flare,
The full length sleeves, the beaded front,
'Twas sewn with loving care;
Though mem'ry may not serve me well
I'll ne'er forget the time,
When first I saw her wedding dress,
In Eighteen Ninety-nine.

But what is this? Does sight deceive?
Do I really see her there,
As she walked among the flowers
With the sunlight in her hair?
Well! that shook me for a moment,
I was startled, I confess,
When I saw my daughter Mildred
In her Mother's wedding dress!

SEPTEMBER IN ALBERTA

September in Alberta,
Our harvest work is done;
The grain stooks standin' row on row
Are dryin' in the sun;
A lone crow caws, an' flyin' south,
I hear the wild goose-call,
Through the haze of Indian summer,
That's Alberta, in the fall!

The golden glow is noddin'
Her gaudy yellow crown,
An' the old Virginny creeper's
Jest a mass of red an' brown,
With a little green a-showin'
An' a bit of purple too,
While the sun is allus shinin'
From a sky of deepest blue.

The young turkeys are a-callin'
It seems they're allus lost,
While the air at early evenin'
Carries just a hint of frost,
An' deeper shadows seem to lie
'Long every lake an' stream,
Where the seedpods of the wild rose
Like red haws richly gleam.

The sun is risin' farther south,
An' shadows longer grow,
While almost every evenin's sky
The rainbow colors show.
Never was a canvas painted
In colors half so grand,
As are the slopes 'long Battle River
Painted by The Master's Hand.

The garden's fairly burstin'
With goods things fer to eat,
Here's a wealth of stored up goodness
That's really hard to beat;
An' I know that I'm most thankful
To The Giver of it all,
An' glad that I'm a-livin'
In Alberta, in the fall.

OH YEAH?

I've just been readin' somethin'
Some feller went an' wrote
About Alberta weather,
An' it sure did get my goat.
He says that "flyin' southward
I hear th' wild goose-call".
Yeh, a goose knows when t' beat it
From "Alberta, in th' fall".

He says, "Th' sun is allus shinin',"
Well, I'm a-tellin' you
It's somethin' else, an' not the sky,
That's colored "deepest blue".
Fer the' sun ain't shone fer nigh a week,
An' a rain that's partly snow,
Has soaked those stooks he tells about,
An' they're "dryin'" mighty slow.

I wonder if that jasper
Ever heard th' north wind blow.
Or ever lifted garden stuff
When th' ground was white with snow?
I'm bettin' that he never dragged
His binder through th' mud,
An' that he never tasted,
A September-frozen spud.

He sez, "th' sun is risin' farther south,
Th' shadows longer grow".
But he plumb fergot t' tell us
About September's snow.
An my one an' only answer
To all that long-haired crew
Who brag about our weather
Is, "Oh Yeah? Nuts to you!"

IN THE GARDEN

I wuz workin' in the garden,
And while leanin' on my hoe
Jest lookin' at the green things,
A-growin' row on row,

A sudden notion struck me
That I would try, an' see
If I could put in writin'
Some thoughts that came to me.

But shucks, it's jest plain useless,
A-tryin' fer to write
About the things ov nature,
An' then see the Northern Light

Drift like ghostly flame-lit fingers,
Clear acrost the starlit sky,
As I've often seen 'em burnin';
An' I've often wondered why

We're so prone to look fer beauty,
In the things that man has made,
When the studio of nature
Is ours fer to raid.

Pictures painted by great masters?
Come an' walk with me this fall,
An' I'll show you pictures painted
By the Master of them all.

From the humble asters, noddin'
In their lowly garden bed,
To the hills 'long Battle River,
Painted brown, an' green, an' red.

Or most any summer's evenin'
When the sun has gone to rest,
Jest take time to look around you,
Turn yer face to'ard the west;

See the after glow of violet,
Mauve an' purple, blue an' rose,
Hev yu seen on painted canvas
Colors that would ekal those?

Could any artist capture
A field of wavin' grain?
Or sun rays through the ground mist
That rises after rain?

How I wish that there wuz some one
With ready tongue er pen,
Who could tell us 'bout these homely things
We see each day, an 'n'

Jest kinda lead us gradjul like,
So's 'at we could learn to see
The things thet Mother Nature
Hez prepared fer you an' me.

Did yu say yu loved good music?
Well I don't see nothin' wrong
With the show staged by a robin
When he sings his vesper song.

Or when oriole or wood-thrush
Their tuneful voices raise
Some mornin', 'long 'bout daybreak,
In a symphony ov praise.

Hev yu listened to thet chorus?
Hev yu heard thet sweet bird-call?
Sounds jest like they're sayin' "thank you"
To the Giver ov it all.

Yes indeed we do need some one
To teach us to 'preciate
The things we see most every day,
Right within our own front gate.

Folks; yu jest don't need to wander,
Aint no use at all to roam
In a search fer nature's beauty,
Fer yu hev it right at home.

THE OYSTER SUPPER

(Grand Meadow U.F.A., February, 1930)

Our own L. J. Auten's the man who has bought them
And will serve them up smooth as a dream,
While Seversen (Tony), who's both tall and bony,
Will measure out butter and cream.

Then Christian Albrecht will spend half the night
Helping Kofoed ladle the soup,
And Myrl Gee will come handy, for he's a jim-dandy
At handling stuff with a scoop.

Here's big Andy Reid, he's one of the breed
That is said to be spoiling for fight;
He'll be first at the table and use a long ladle
In serving his partner, Bill White.

There's Henry G. Taylor, who looks like a sailor,
'Tis known he likes oysters quite well,
As a feeder he's speedy, but will class with the needy,
For his partner is Doc. Addinell.

Of Aro and Frank, the former's a crank
On the way that his oysters are done,
But Frank will just smile, and eat a long while,
The hungry old son-of-a-gun.

But Lonnie and Art (their names I can't part)
To see them eat, sure is a scream—
When you think they have done, they have only begun,
And they'll finish on lemon ice cream.

Here's Marvin, the Carter, always ready to barter
His socks, with the canny Jim Lee;
They'll leave a clean platter, but that doesn't matter,
They can't beat that man, Walter Gee.

Now Franklin S. James is one of those names
With which it is easy to rhyme,
With Jim Auten he's eating, and like all at this meeting,
I'm sure they will have a good time.

There's Harry, the clerk, who does all the work,
No matter 'twere easy or hard,
If olives are ripe we'll hand him the tripe,
And watch it go down by the yard.

A young man named Charley, a grower of barley,
Is eating with Elgaard the Dane.
And Morrow the chairman, we could easily spare him,
We suspect he has whey on the brain.

But James Johnson Dick will bring an ice pick,
To spear of the oysters a score,
With William J. Schierer, who'll say I'm a liar
When I tell you they ate forty-four.

Now Bobby and Earl will each take a whirl,
At feeding it in with two spoons,
While August and Fred will be ready for bed
When they've finished the pickles and prunes.

Lon Smith and Herb Stretch, have promised to fetch
Two fiddles—well furnished with strings,
They're dining on fish, and will relish a dish
Of halibut, salmon and lings.

A. E. Hobbs, gaunt and tall, will not eat at all
If the oysters are not on the shell;
Though we gave him a peck, he'll need more, by heck,
For his partner is Billy Purnell.

There's grave Walter Larsen, who eats like a parson,
His partner's one Headley, named Bird,
They'll masticate salads, and criticize ballads,
As at soup they'll be seen (also heard).

And Peter the Scot, will be there on the dot,
The first to be paying his dues,
And for fear he is cheated, will see that he's seated
With Gordon, purveyor of news.

I'll quit while I can, if I've missed any man
I apologize now, if I may;
And to all at this meeting, extend a real greeting
From Grand Meadow United F.A.

I WAS BORN IN "I-O-WAY"

(The pronunciation "I-o-uh" as well as the commonly used "I-o-way" has been used.)

In the bright sunshine of August,
Looking out o'er fields of green,
I note their changing color, day by day.
There come thoughts of boyhood days to me,
I see them scene by scene,
In the land of old Iowa, far away.

The apples now are turning yellow,
And the plums are getting sweet,
And the hummingbird darts by on gauzy wing,
And the turtledove is cooing,
As I trudge with weary feet,
To bring a pail of water from the spring.

Or lying 'neath the willows
I hear the catbird call,
And an answer comes from yonder saucy jay,
And the old bullfrog is croaking
Among the rushes tall—
In the land we native-born call "Ioway".

Or when resting at the noontime,
'Neath the old boxelder tree,
(It seems as tho' 'twere only yesterday)
I listen to "bob-white",
And I think he's calling me
In the land of old Iowa, far away.

I am thinking now also,
Of the many friends I knew,
Both old and young, what memories they bring.
Of "Old Neddie" who once showed me
Where he kept his precious "brew"
Of "hot wather" that was cooling in the spring.

And how, when shirking all our work,
My brother, Steve, and I
Fished for catfish in "the Soldier", day by day,
With our pockets filled with apples
To be eaten on the sly—
In that land we native-born call "Ioway".

In the evening, from the pasture,
Comes the tinkle of a bell,
And I listen to the crickets, loud and shrill,
While from deep down in the hollow,
Comes a sound I love so well,
'Tis the lonesome, mournful call of whip-poor-will.

They tell me now it's not the same,
That drainage changed it all,
And corn now grows, where once I cut wild hay;
And alfalfa now is blooming,
Where once grew rushes tall—
In the land of old Iowa, far away.

My step is somewhat slower now,
I've changed a lot since then;
My once dark hair has turned to iron grey,
And all of those I knew as boys,
Are old and greyhaired men
In that land we native born call, "Ioway".

Once more I'd like to tread those woods,
To hear the catbird call;
On that green turf I'd like my head to lay.
But I know those days have long since passed,
Far, far beyond recall—
In the land of old Iowa, far away.

TO MY VALENTINE

(February, 1944)

She's very young, and oh so fair,
With clear blue eyes and light brown hair,
A dimple in her chin.
Demure, she stands in front of me,
Then seats herself upon my knee,
A word or smile to win.

Perched on the arm of my old chair,
The while she tries to curl my hair,
Then tells me she's my own;
She tweaks my ear, away she goes,
(Perhaps she also pulls my nose)
Granddaughter, blue-eyed Joan.

ARO D. CRAWFORD

"He was my friend, I shall not look upon his like again"

Good-bye old friend. The silver cord
Is severed but in twain,
And you and I will meet no more
Upon this earth again.

Today I stood beside your grave,
All unashamed my tears,
As pages of the book of time
I turned back twoscore years.

When grief and sorrow were my lot,
When life seemed full of care,
Your friendly hand outstretched to me
Did help the burden bear.

Friend, helper, neighbor, have you been;
Faithful, staunch and true,
I would that I could but repay
The debt that I owe you.

God grant you rest; your epitaph:
"HERE SLEEPS IN PEACE A MAN"
Life's pathway is more lonely now,
For your old neighbor,
Dan.

THE OLD DINNER HORN

Away back there on the kitchen shelf,
Among things old and worn,
Forgotten now by all but me,
A battered old dinner horn.

Just pass it down to me will you,
Brush off the dust and grime,
While I turn back some pages few
Of my own book of time.

Now blow it strongly, and blow again
At the noon-tide's sultry gleam,
And I'll see them coming across the field,
A faithful fourhorse team.

Now, blow the old horn loudly, now.
Till the echoes weave and dance,
A loud clear note for a soldier boy
Who sleeps somewhere in France.

I see him now as he strode along
The path through the poplars tall,
Again I hear his merry shout
As he answered its homing call.

Yet sound it again, a low sad note
Like the turtledove's soft moan,
For her whose lips on that old horn
So oft has called me home.

Ah! Place the old horn back again,
My eyes grow dim with tears,
When memories call back again
Those old-time happy years.

Perhaps when ties that bind me
To this earth shall set me free,
I'll carry thoughts of those dear days
Into eternity.

TO GRACE AND FRANK

(On their forty-fifth wedding anniversary, March, 1942)

March twenty-third in ninety-seven
Five and forty are the years,
Since you two began life's journey
Through this vale of smiles and tears.

Smiles and tears? Yes you have known them,
Else life would not be complete;
Every life must taste some bitter,
Just enough to cut the sweet.

Wide your friendly door stood open,
A hearty welcome to extend;
He who entered there a stranger,
Left, to call himself your friend.

Today our prayer: That God will bless you,
Guide and guard you on the way;
And may friends again surround you,
On your Golden Wedding Day.

There recently passed away in Edmonton, one who came to that district long before the railroad, one of the real pioneers of Alberta, and in memory of that hardy breed of men and women who, passing up the more easily conquered prairies, trekked farther west to the "Land of their hearts' desire" I have written the following:

THE PIONEER

(August, 1941)

He strode behind his slow ox team
Across the prairies dry,
And his eyes were fixed on the westering sun
And "Westward" was his cry;
Till he came at last to the great park-lands,
The sweetest land ere known,
And "Here" said he, "Our journey ends,
Here will we build our home".

With fire and axe a place he cleared
On which to build that home;
It was toil and sweat for him and his,
Ere the first crop could be sown.
And the black sod slipped from his smooth moldboard
Down a furrow without a flaw,
While his "Tractor" was driven with whip or goad
And answered to "gee" and "haw".

And many a weary task he did;
Hard work, his days did rule.
Yet freely gave from his meager hoard,
That the children might have school.
Remember, oh children of radio,
Ere you utter that hard luck wail,
That the pioneer won not his farm
By sipping a gin cocktail.

As you glide along o'er a surfaced road,
Guiding your modern car,
Give thought to him who here did know
"The God of things as they are".
For never again will we see his like—
He stands without a peer—
The man who for us, blazed the trail.
God rest you, Pioneer.

ANDREW REID

Men are of two kinds, and he
Was of the kind I'd like to be.
Some preach their virtues, and a few
Express their lives by what they do.
That sort was he. No flow'ry phrase
Or glibly spoken words of praise
Won friends for him. He wasn't cheap
Or shallow, but his course ran deep,
And it was pure. You know the kind.
Not many in a life you find
Whose deeds outrun their words so far
That more than what they seem they are.

(From a poem by Edgar Guest.)

What's this you are telling me, daughter,
I hope I've not heard you aright,
That the soul of our old neighbor, Andy,
Has from this earth taken its flight?
But it's true, you say? Ah, but I'm sorry.
We've lost a good neighbor, and then
We're just learning to value old friendships
When we're nearing our threescore and ten.

Like the green of the spruce in the valley,
His memory ever shall be.
The book of his life he left open,
That any who cared to might see.
Not all of the powers of darkness,
Not even the world's darkest night
Can put out the light of one candle,
The candle that Andy called RIGHT.

And to all of his sorrowing family
I would say, "Let this thought comfort you—
That he, as a husband and father,
Was loyal, and kindly, and true.
Though now freed from this world and its labor,
He's sleeping the sleep of the blest;
As counsellor, friend, and good neighbor,
He gave to the world of his best".

But hark now, I hear the bell tolling,
Its muffled tones deaden the ear;
In sorrow his friends are now passing,
On slow feet they tread by his bier.
And now to the God Of Our Fathers,
We will pray, in the name of His Son,
That He'll welcome the soul of our Andy
With the words of approval, "WELL DONE".

TO A GIRL IN UNIFORM

(June, 1943)

"I cannot sing the old songs"—
Thus sang a pretty girl.
She was dressed in Army khaki,
Smooth and shining every curl;
With jaunty cap upon her head,
Stout shoes upon her feet,
Her cheeks like rosy apples
Looked sweet enough to eat.

"I cannot sing the old songs
They are so sad and deep"—
And she vaulted o'er the sidewalk
And landed in a Jeep,
Then stepped upon the starter
And down the road she flew;
And the Nazis all would scatter,
Could they see her coming through.

"I cannot sing the old songs
Nor dream those dreams again"—
Her voice a sweet soprano
As she sang the old refrain;
And the way she went through traffic
Caused pedestrians to duck;
It would leave a Dago speechless
Just to see her drive a truck.

"I cannot sing the old songs
They are too sad for me"—
We have thousands more just like her
In this land of liberty.
And she knows that we all love her—
That we love her? Yes, and how!
She's our ultra-modern lassie,
And "She's in the Army now".

FORTY YEARS AGO

Full forty years have passed, dear wife,
Since we stood side by side,
On that autumn morning long ago—
You were a lovely bride.

The morning light, like molten gold,
Indeed 'twas wonderous fair;
But a gold that shone alone for me,
Was the sunlight in your hair.

In solemn tones the preacher said,
While all around was still,
"Till death doth part". Then came your voice
In answer sweet, "I will!"

And as the days grew into years,
The greatest thrill for me
Came on that day when I did hold
Our first-born on my knee.

Our boys have grown to man's estate.
Our girls have each their home.
And you and I are once more left
As we were then—alone.

And time has changed us; now your hair
The gold no longer shows;
My locks, once black as raven's wing,
Are white as winter snows.

As hand in hand we tread that vale,
Where shadows longer grow,
We'll think of all the golden dreams
Of forty years ago.

Until there comes that day when we
Must sleep beneath the sod,
We'll ne'er forget, dear wife of mine,
To trust all things to God.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(To Ruth, my old schoolmate, and lifelong friend, on her birthday October 29,
1940)

I've visited the old home-town,
I've trod the same old street;
The "gumbo" now no longer shows,
'Tis hidden with concrete.
And strange indeed it seemed to me
As I walked to and fro,
Among the scenes that you and I
Knew, fifty years ago.

Our old schoolhouse has been removed,
A highway now runs through
The grounds where you and Minnie,
Played with Sadie, Bess and Sue;
Alfalfa was in full bloom,
And corn grew rank and tall
In "Gilmore's field", where once you know
We boys played tag and ball.

Their voices I could almost hear
As they played at pitch and toss,
When down the pathway, came the girl
We knew as Lottie Cross.
Like ours, her hair is turning gray,
Age lines have marked her face,
But when she spoke, the same old smile
Was in the same old place.

We spoke of them, the girls and boys
Who were our schoolmates then,
The only "boys" that now are left,
Are old and grey-haired men.
And of the "girls" who played with you,
But few are left we know;
The girls and boys, that you and I
Knew, fifty years ago.

The years pass swiftly by, old friend,
We face a westering sun.
I'd like to see my finished tasks,
To know my chores are done.
In another life, I wonder
If once again I'll know
The girls and boys, that you and I
Knew, fifty years ago.

WHEN THE LEAVES BEGIN TO FALL

There's a touch of frost this morning,
And the air is cold and clear,
There's a "something" tells all nature,
That the winter time is near.
The flowers now are drooping,
That grew so rank and tall,
And their beauty now is fading,
As the leaves begin to fall.

Down Battle River Valley
The morning mists now roll,
While the redness of the sunset
Would enthrall the very soul.
From far above comes floating
The wild goose trumpet-call,
As he wings his way far southward,
When the leaves begin to fall.

The sun is rising later,
And its rays come slanting down,
Pointing all the shadows northward,
On the road that leads to town;
While a south wind, now, that's stealing
Among the poplars tall,
Seems to whisper to us softly,
"Now the leaves begin to fall".

A song that never ceases—
The threshers' steady hum—
May be heard from early morning
To the setting of the sun.
Soon the haze of Indian summer
Will be telling one and all,
That the time of year is coming
When the leaves begin to fall.

When life's harvest time is ended,
And its fields are brown and sere,
When my grain has all been garnered,
And I know my "winter's" near;
When at last my chores are finished,
And I hear the Master call—
I hope He'll find me ready,
When the leaves begin to fall.

WE, WHO ONCE SAID GOODBYE

Seated alone in the firelight glow,
I list to the night-bird's call,
As I watch the flames' weird shadows
On ceiling, curtain and wall.

Weaving, and ever-changing,
Like clouds o'er a stormswept sky,
They seem but like shadowy tokens
That float between you and I.

And e'en as the sparks fly upward,
Out through the smoke-grimed flue,
So do my thoughts fly onward,
Onward through space to you.

Nor time, nor tide, nor distance,
Can ever rob me of this—
The mem'ry of our last goodbye,
That lingering parting kiss.

May we some day in the future,
Forgetting each tear and sigh,
Again clasp hands in greeting,
And nevermore say goodbye.

CHRISTMAS GREETING TO AN OLD FRIEND

"Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot"
Should we no longer care
To hear from those we call "Old friends"
To know just how they fare?

Ah no! At least at Christmas time
We should a message send,
Although 'twere but a little card,
To greet each old-time friend.

I've passed my own three-score-and-ten
A full three years ago,
And as the years slip swiftly by
Old friendships dearer grow.

Each year the list grows smaller yet,
Each year old Father Time
Doth take a heavy toll of those
Who were your friends and mine.

And so in mem'ry's name, my dear,
Come place your hand in mine,
And you and I will drink a toast
To "The days of Auld Lang Syne".

DEPRESSION'S LESSONS

(To my Daughter, Esther, 1936)

The depression well has taught
Me to give a little thought
To where the dollars, dimes
And quarters go;
And I've learned throughout these years
In this vale of smiles and tears,
That there's very little comfort
Here below.

It has taught me to watch out,
To cultivate a taste for kraut,
Instead of fancy canned goods
From the shelf;

To eat potato soup and beans,
With cottage cheese and greens;
And save for picture shows, my
Precious pelf.

It has taught me to darn socks,
And turn my last year's frocks,
And wear yet one more season
My old hat;

And I know what I will do
When social dividends come through—
I'll spend it all for knickknacks,
And that's that!

AT HOME

(June, 1941)

"He who goes out of his own house in search of happiness, runs after a shadow". —CHINESE PROVERB

The sun is bright this morning,
The grass is sweet with dew,
While the lilacs in the garden
Have lit their lamps of blue.
From yonder in the hedgerow,
I hear a woodthrush sing,
And just now I saw an oriole
Dart by on gaudy wing.

Last night the stars of heaven
Like silver lanterns gleamed,
While the boreal light at midnight
Her dragon banners streamed;
And this morning, mists came floating
From the lowlands, fold on fold—
The sun's rays striking through them,
Looked like old lace over gold.

Last fall it was, I tired
Of our homely, daily chores;
And I spent most of last winter
Near the old Pacific's shores.
And many were the sights and sounds
Which did seem strange to me,
As I walked among the thousands,
In a city by the sea.

Near the bridge that spans the Lion's Gate
I stood at eventide,
And watched the waves come rolling in
From out the ocean wide.
Below me there, the wooded slopes
Were hid in twilight gloom,
As in the west there sank to rest
A pale and crescent moon.

Then I turned, and looking upward
From the ocean's deepborn swells,
Saw the fir-clad mountains standing,
Grim and silent sentinels.
And again I've seen their snowpeaks
Touched with gold at early morn,
But such sights are all but wasted
On a plainsman, bred and born.

I've watched freighters gray, unloading
Goods from countries far and near;
And a liner, tall and stately,
Moving slowly to her pier.
And I've seen the breakers pounding
On black rock and hard sea-sand,
Yet I'd rather see in springtime,
Just a field of level land.

With the good brown earth beneath me,
And above a sky of blue,
And the sprouting grain just showing
In the drill-rows, straight and true.
And instead of whitecaps tumbling,
Rushing fast before the storm,
Give to me a grainfield, waving
In a west wind soft and warm.

And instead of crowded city streets,
With their smell of gas and oil,
Let me walk the fields at evening,
And smell the new-turned soil.
And I've come to this conclusion:
That far one need not roam
To know the truth of the old saying
That, "THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME".

THE TAXPAYER'S SONG

(Federal tax budget, 1943)

Let's sing a song of taxes,
A pocket full of cash!
When you go to pay your taxes now,
T'will settle well your hash.
You'll need at least a million
Before you can cut a dash,
As we go mooching along!
Oh, there's taxes on your underwear,
A tax upon your coat,
While the tax upon tobacco
Is the one that gets my goat.
It's enough to drive a citizen
To jumping off the boat,
As we go marching on!

CHORUS

Taxes, taxes, all are rising,
Taxes, taxes, everywhere,
The things they're taxing now are most surprising,
They've even taxed the air!

There's a tax upon your radio,
A tax upon each boot,
Oh, the man who levies taxes
Is sure a sly old coot;
If he robbed the banks of all their cash
He'd not get half the loot,
As we go mooching along!
There's a tax upon our lumber,
And a tax on every nail;
You forget the tax on labor
And you'll find yourself in jail!
Just to contemplate our taxes now
Would turn a darkie pale,
As we go marching on!

There are taxes on your stockings,
And a tax upon your skirt,
With the taxes on your income
You must never, never, flirt;
While the tax upon your washboard,
Should at least collect the dirt,
As we go mooching along!
There's a tax upon your step-ins
And another on your trunk,
But the one upon your bathtub
Is the one that is the bunk.
It would cause a wooden Indian
To go out upon a drunk—
As we go marching on!

There's a tax upon our leather,
And a tax upon our salt,
We might get more for our barley
If they didn't tax the malt;
Should you die before your tax is paid
They'll hold you in default—
As we go mooching along!
There's a tax upon each garter,
And a tax upon your smock,
There's a tax upon your silverware,
And one upon each frock.
Should you try to pay all taxes
Your clothes would be in hock,
As we go marching on!

There's a tax on automobiles
And a tax upon the oil,
Just the thought of all these taxes
Your holiday would spoil,
They'll tax you if you're idle,
And they'll tax you if you toil,
As we go mooching along!
There's a tax upon all rubber,
And another on our soap,
I suppose there's one on blubber,
And I know there's one on rope.
That they'll make one to hang Hitler with
Is now my dearest hope!
As we go marching on.

Oh there's taxes on our sugar,
And a tax upon our beer;
Is it the tax upon cosmetics
That makes the girls so dear?
Why 'twould cause a brazen monkey
For to shed a silent tear—
As we go mooching along!
There's a tax upon your linen,
And a tax upon your bed;
When you pay the tax on liquor
You will sure be seeing red.
When at last you're through with living
They will tax you when you're dead—
As we go marching on!

Yes, we'll joke about our taxes,
But we'll pay them as they come,
For that's the way that we can help
To lick the lousy Hun.
And our boys are getting ready
For to put him on the run,
As they go marching along!
Our taxes now are buying bullets
And guns with which to shoot
That enemy of all our race,
That howling Hitler brute.
And our boys are just the ones, we know,
To get the lousy coot—
As they go marching on!

LAST CHORUS

It's your taxes they are spending,
To help the boys that's over there!
And the lads will soon be sending
Us a lock of Hitler's hair!

AS OTHERS SEE US

I'd been away from our old town
A full twelvemonth or more,
Ere once again I crossed the street
In front of Algar's store.

I wondered then if any friend,
My face would gladly see,
But found that not one single soul
Paid slightest heed to me.

Until at last there did come one,
Who grasped my hand and said,
"My friend, I'm glad to see you here,
I thought that you were dead".

"Now tell me all this tale", I said,
"And at the first begin,
What made you think that I had gone
From out this world of sin?"

"Now hearken to me sir," he said,
"And I will tell you true,
The last few week's I've heard at least
Three men speak well of you".

LONESOME FOR YOU

O'er Killarney the moon is now shining,
The grass is now sweet with the dew,
The nightingale sweetly is singing,
And I'm thinking dear Norah of you.

Oh come back to Erin, Achushla,
Come back from that land o'er the sea,
Sail on! Oh, white ship of the morning,
And bring back my Colleen to me.

In the valley the lillies are blooming,
By the hedgerow the roses grow tall,
As alone I tread now down the pathway
That leads by the old garden wall.

'Twas here on an evening in springtime
Your promise you did give to me,
But now I am left sad and lonely,
For you've gone far over the sea.

Though you dwell 'neath the wings of the Eagle
In the land of the red, white and blue,
Remember that here in Old Erin,
There's a heart that beats only for you.

Oh come back to Erin, Allanna,
Come back from that land o'er the sea,
Sail on! Oh, white ship of the morning,
And bring back sweet Norah to me.

"THE WINTER HERE WAS SWELL!"

(Vancouver, February, 1946)

Our winter now is passing fast,
And longer grows each day,
I'm looking forward to the time.
When I'll go home next May.
I know some one will to me say,
"My friend, you're looking well.
You should've never gone away,
Our winter here was swell.
'Tis true, we had those cold east winds,
And then of course you know,
We had one storm that left with us
A good two feet of snow.
The roads were blocked,
And drifted high the path to our front gate;
But on the whole, I'll tell you sir,
Our winter was just great."
And then I'll smile, a sickly grin,
And answer "Yes I know,"
And to myself I'll also say,
"Ye gods, two feet of snow".
"Yes sir," he'll say, "The mercury did stop
at forty nine,
You sure guessed wrong again my friend,
Our winter was just fine!"
Again I'll murmur, "Yes I know,"
Of words I am quite shy,
And hope that some real hardy soul,
(A pessimistic guy)
Will take my hand and say to me,
Discarding ifs and buts,
"You're lucky to have gone away,
Our winter was the NUTS!"

OH SOLDIER BOY

(August, 1943)

The night you said goodbye to me
We stood on yonder hill,
And listened to that haunting cry,
The song of whip-poor-will.
When'er I hear that sweet love call
Your own dear face I see,
And could you hear the whip-poor-will
You would remember me.

CHORUS

Oh soldier boy, my soldier boy,
Wherever you may be,
I pray that God will guard you,
And bring you back to me.

I know not where you are tonight—
Perhaps on desert sands,
Perhaps you sleep 'neath Northern light
In some far distant land.
It matters not where'er you are--
In air, on land or sea—
Oh soldier boy, my soldier boy,
You will return to me.

And when at last there comes that day,
When war and strife will cease,
When we have won the victory,
And all the world at peace—
Within each other's arms at last,
We'll stand on yonder hill,
And once again we'll listen to
The song of whip-poor-will.

A 1943 MODEL MAUD MUELLER

Maud Mueller on a summer day
Mounted her jeep, and drove away.
In Army Khaki she was dressed,
A well shod foot the pedal pressed.

Singing, she drove with merry glee,
Near-missed a bridge, and grazed a tree.
Then farther pressed the pedal down,
She was due to report in a nearby town.

The Judge walked slowly down the lane,
For his gouty foot did give him pain,
And he thought, "How sweet would be this life
If I only had Maud for my wife".

"But of all sad words, it is my guess
The saddest are these, 'She wouldn't say yes!'"
At the turn they met. Quoth Maud, "old toad,
You're on the wrong side of the road".

For once the Judge forgot his gout,
And lit in the ditch all spraddled out.
As Maud the corner on two wheels turned,
The old Judge growled, "Well I'll be durned".

"I thought that girl was kind and sweet,
But I didn't know she drove a jeep
At the rate of a mile in nothing flat.
I'll never marry a girl like that".

He chose a wife from the fashion page,
Who played good bridge, and was his own age.
But at times the Judge would moan in his sleep,
As he dreamed of a girl who drove a jeep.

And Maud oft thought, 'neath the harvest moon,
"If I had married that ancient goon
I'd not have all these errands to run,
Though life would not have been half the fun".

She wedded a soldier, all unknown,
And raised an army of her own.
And the moral is: "If you'd soundly sleep,
Beware of a girl who drives a jeep".

C. C. REED

Farewell to thee, Old Friend and Neighbor,
You have answered life's curfew bell;
Almost it seems, one can hear your voice,
"No tears for me, all is well".

Accepting whatever Fate brought you
In this vale of smiles and tears,
Yours was a life well ripened
By more than fourscore years.

Loyal to wife and family,
Giving to each his due,
Stern against all that was wrongful,
That was the heart of you.

Hating the false and shoddy,
Standing for that which was true,
Faithful to friend and neighbor,
That was the soul of you.

Facing the future calmly
When your time had come to go,
Should tears then be shed at your passing?
You would not wish it so.

Faith in the God of Our Fathers,
Honest in word and deed;
God in Thy mercy, deal gently
With the soul of C. C. Reed.

TO AN ABSENT FRIEND

There is no friend like the old friend
We've known throughout the years,
Who shared with us the gladsome days,
And likewise shared our tears.

Could I but hold your hand in mine,
See once again your smile,
And hear once more your cheery voice,
'Twould make life seem worth while.

Though time and distance now us part,
And wishing seems but vain—
Yet hope is strong within my heart
That we shall meet again.

WHEN OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG

Oh, bygone days of long ago,
Our hearts were light and free;
When song and laugh, and faith and hope
Made life a jubilee;
Before our eyes, the future
Like a song as yet unsung—
Oh, the splendor of the good old earth,
When our hearts were young.

The step that then was bouyant
Now halts along the way,
And tresses that were darkly brown
Have long since turned to gray;
Yet our thoughts will often wander
And our feet would stray among
The old-time joys of yesterday,
When our hearts were young.

When life's pilgrimage is ended
And we hear The Master call,
When earth folds us to her bosom
As the evening shadows fall,
May we each then be permitted
To forever stroll among
The flowers in His Garden,
And our hearts be always young.

A HOUSEWIFE'S LAMENT

Because I was unable to finish my job of riding the binder through the 1947 harvest, my daughter Esther took over, and this is her story

Perched up here on the binder seat,
Bouncing across the field,
I watch the grain on the platform
And wonder what it will yield.

And I say to myself "The farmer
Is getting a lousy deal,"
When Hubby shouts from the tractor,
"Hey! Just lower that reel!"

'Tis afternoon and I'm sleepy,
I was up before the dawn,
And I wonder if Dad will remember
To put the beef roast on.

As I reach for the shifting lever
Something gets in my eye,
And again I am reminded,
"This grain is not six feet high".

Now I'm thinking of Joan and Danny,
I wonder if they're at home,
And if they (This line was censored)
The bullwheel struck a stone!

Someone is going to have a new dress
When next she gets to town;
And again that voice from the tractor,
"Can't you let that darned reel down?"

I suppose when this job is finished,
My black marks will loom quite large,
But I hope that good St. Peter
Will write it as "BINDER, NO CHARGE!"

POST ELECTION FACES

(Provincial Election, August, 1944)

Today I saw my barber friend,
And found his spirits low,
"What ho, good friend?" said I, and then
He told this tale of woe.
"Just listen close good sir," said he,
"And you will plainly see,
It was this last election stunt,
That almost ruined me!
A Social Crediter today
Is mighty hard to shave,
On how we won the battle
He will long and loudly rave;
And each and every face is split,
With a complacent grin,
With wrinkles deep from near the eyes,
To well beneath the chin.
Then when a C.C.-Effer calls,
With countenance so glum,
I know 'twill take me double time,
On his long face, By gum!
Yet one faint ray of light doth shine,
From out my cloudlit sky,
My last and only hope is he,
That Independent guy.
Why sir, those fellows are so meek,
They will not even growl
When I just spread lather on the face,
And wipe it with a towell"

A FISH STORY

I have eaten sockeye salmon,
Mountain trout and muskellunge,
I have tackled German carp and tullibee;
Of halibut and whitefish,
Of course there's nothing wrong,
But catfish is the only fish for me.

Once I wandered from Alberta,
On a trip that took me down
To the land where people say the tall corn grows.
And I walked the streets at noontime
In a certain goodsized town,
Past which the old Missouri River flows.

I was hungry, and while looking
For a place where I could eat,
At a price that I could well afford to pay,
Saw a sign set in a window
Which brought new life to my feet:
"Missouri River catfish served today".

All caution now had fled me,
And I walked into that room,
Where were tables spread with covers, snowy white,
There were only a few diners,
Though the time was just full noon,
And I felt that here, the food would be just right.

A waiter bowed me onward,
And seated me with care,
At a table where another person sat.
I but glanced across at her and saw
A head of auburn hair,
Surmounted by a thing that's called a hat.

I pushed away the menu,
And to show I was at ease,
Said: "Long I've tarried in Alberta, so today
Just bring to me of catfish,
A double order, please,
And watch me while I put it all away".

He headed for the kitchen,
And was gone but minutes few,
When again I saw him coming down the room,
And my eyes grew wide with wonder,
For I tell you this is true,
He had fish enough to feed a whole platoon.

"And for dessert, what will you have,"
The waiter said to me,
And I think the fellow winked the other eye.
"Dessert" said I, "Now let me see,
I think that you may bring
To me, a piece of huckleberry pie".

I had eaten half the catfish,
When the waiter brought the pie,
And I watched him as he fumbled at his coat.
Bringing forth a pad and pencil,
Cast on me a wary eye,
Then making up his mind, some figures wrote.

I looked then at those figures,
And my appetite did fail,
And I wondered if ten days would pay my fine!
For I thought that I would surely spend
At least that time in jail,
For the total there was just two forty-nine.

I began to search my pockets,
Though I knew it was no use;
But I counted once again my money o'er,
For wandering 'round a city
Will with money play the duece,
And all I'd left was just one thirty-four.

"I heard you say 'Alberta',"
The lady said to me,
"And I saw you search your pockets for more pelf,
And I'll tell you sir, those antics
Are not strange at all to see,
For I proved up on a homestead there myself!"

Now by all the deeds of glory!
(Does a catfish ever laugh?)
Of words to tell my feelings I now fail;
For believe me now, that lady
Just ate the other half,
Split the check, and kept yours truly out of jail.

THREE-SCORE AND TEN

(October 24th, 1944)

A dull and sad October day,
The rain comes slowly down,
A cold gray mist now almost hides
The hill and road to town.

The mouldering leaves now thickly lie
Along the hedgerow tall,
From the topmost bough of yon tall tree
There comes a crow's hoarse call.

The leaves are red on bush and tree,
The pasture's brown and sere,
On every hand the signs proclaim
The dying of the year.

I tread the path through the old spruce grove
Where the partridge has her home,
Where the foot sinks deep in the sodden moss
And the slinking coyotes roam.

The cattle seek a sheltered nook
Where the willows thickly grow,
As drifting down from leaden skies
The first few flakes of snow.

There come to me the thoughts of those
Dear days of long ago,
When as a boy I welcomed
The first fall of the snow.

Those bygone days! A fleeting wish
To be a boy again,
For just today I've reached the age
Of three-score years and ten!

SUNDAY, IN THE FALL

It 'pears to me that Sunday's
The most lonesome day of all,
And 'specially a Sunday
'Long 'bout this time in the fall.

You can't hear the tractors hummin',
The crew's not out there pitchin' sheaves,
It's so quiet you can almost hear
The fallin' of the leaves.

There's a haze acrost the stubble,
An' the sun rays slantin' down
Don't seem to give no life at all
To things now dead an' brown.

The only sound comes from that crow
A-top the poplar tall,
Just sounds like he is lonesome too
On Sunday, in the fall.

An old fellow gets so lonely
A-moseyin' 'round alone,
The folks have gone a-visitin'
And there's no one else at home.

And when evenin's chores are finished,
The milkin' done an' all,
In my old chair I sit an' dream,
On Sunday, in the fall.

FINIS

If you have read this booklet through,
Dear Sir (or Madam), 'tis quite true
You've found the going tough,
But this I promise you, my friend,
I'll bring these verses to an end
And cry, "Enough, Enough!"

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